

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-46 (canceled)

Claim 47 (new): A jackpot system for an allocation of wins from at least one jackpot to players playing at a plurality of gaming positions, the jackpot system comprising a computer network associated with said gaming positions, a computing engine included in said computer network and having a memory for receiving inputs from the gaming positions and at least one output for communicating information to said players at said gaming positions, at least one payable associated with said jackpot and stored in one of said memory and another memory associated with said computer network, said payable associated with said jackpot being capable of being configured by an operator and having a plurality of possible winning entries and respective wins associated with each of said winning entries, a selection generator which is triggered at least once, via said computer network, by a trigger input generated in response to the playing of each game of a group of selected games, to generate a selection, and means for comparing the selection generated with said payable, and, in the event of the selection generated corresponding to one of said winning entries, initiating a transfer of information related to the associated win to at least one of at least one player associated with the gaming position which triggered the selection and another jackpot of one of the same jackpot system and a different jackpot system.

Claim 48 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said computing engine is a centralized computing engine.

Claim 49 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said computing engine is a distributed computing engine.

Claim 50 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said payable includes an input operable by at least one of an operator or a manufacturer for inputting information relating to at least one of the winning entries and wins associated with said winning entries.

Claim 51 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said inputs from said gaming positions comprise at least one of the following items of information:

- a value related to an amount bet at each game at the gaming position,
- information relating to the time at which each game is played,
- an indication of the identity of the gaming position,
- information relating to the geographical location of the gaming positions,
- information relating to one or more player attributes such as the identity of the player,
- player activity level,
- information on the type of game played,
- achievement of a specific win combination at the gaming position,
- information relating to an external event, [such as a manual input from an operator or an input from another jackpot or jackpot system],
- information whether the gaming position is in operation,
- information on the number of patrons entering the casino [and/or leaving the casino], and
- information on the number of patrons leaving the casino.

Claim 52 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said at least one output comprises at least one of the following:

- an output to one or more jackpot displays,
- an output to one or more multimedia devices [sound, light, television screen, smoke generator],
- an output to at least one of a display and an indicator associated with at least one of said gaming positions.

Claim 53 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said entries in said payable comprise at least one of the following:

- a sequence of consecutive numbers each associated with one of a respective win, a sequence of consecutive numbers associated with no win, and a plurality of wins of equal value,
- a plurality of random numbers each associated with one of a respective win, no win, and a plurality of wins of equal value,
- an indication of how many like wins associated with a winning entry have not been allocated, if any,
- a plurality of dissimilar wins in a given sequence associated with one winning entry.

Claim 54 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said wins comprise at least one of the following:

- a fixed sum of money,
- a sum of money related to a jackpot amount,
- a physical prize,
- a non-physical prize,
- a casino complementary.

Claim 55 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said selection generator comprises a counter for counting the total number of trigger inputs generated in response to the playing of each game of a group of selected games and used in conjunction with a plurality of random numbers defining said winning entries in said payable.

Claim 56 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said selection generator comprises a random number generator optionally used with a said payable having one of a sequence of consecutive numbers defining said winning entries and a plurality of random numbers defining said winning entries.

Claim 57 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 56, wherein means is provided for varying the probability of a win in response to at least one of the following inputs:

- time of day,
- geographic location of a respective gaming position,
- an instantaneous jackpot value,
- amount of bet,
- player attributes,
- player activity level,
- player contribution to the jackpot,
- minimum possible bet amount,
- level of activity in casino,
- system generated functions of at least one of time, location and any combination of the above listed inputs,
- predetermined patterns.

Claim 58 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein a dynamic probability matrix is provided for controlling said selection generator.

Claim 59 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 57, wherein said means for varying the probability of a win comprises means for varying a range of random numbers capable of generation by said selection generator in response to each trigger input.

Claim 60 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 59, wherein said means for varying the probability of a win comprises means for varying an associated entry in a dynamic probability matrix, which can be one of the same and different for all gaming positions.

Claim 61 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein the transfer of the associated win to at least one player takes place in accordance with at least one of the following possibilities:

- small wins credited to a gaming position meter,
- small wins paid out immediately at the gaming position,

- small wins credited to one of a cashless card and a cashless account in a casino data base, the cashless card and cashless account being associated with the player,
- small wins credited to a player tracking bonus points account associated with the player,
- larger wins by crediting player account at casino bank,
- larger wins in cash at a casino cage,
- major wins by special presentation to a player to maximize publicity effect and enhance player interest,
- major wins by payment to one of a cashless account at a casino and a cashless card,
- win paid out in accordance with a value dependent table.

Claim 62 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein the transfer of the associated win takes place to a plurality of players in accordance with at least one of the following schemes:

- a win of a fixed value to a player at a gaming station which triggered the win and a win of a respective second value to one or more associated players,
- a win of a first value to a player at a gaming position which triggered the win and a win of a respective second value to other members of a predefined group.

Claim 63 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47 and comprising a plurality of jackpots, wherein a proportional payment is made from each bet wagered in one jackpot of the jackpot system into one of a further jackpot of the jackpot system and a jackpot of a further jackpot system.

Claim 64 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 63, wherein said further jackpot comprises at least one of the following:

- a further jackpot associated with the same group of selected games,
- a further jackpot associated with a different group of selected games,
- a further jackpot associated with a different casino.

Claim 65 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47 and comprising a plurality of jackpots, wherein a win associated with one of said jackpots triggers a payment into a further jackpot.

Claim 66 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said computing engine comprises at least one jackpot memory for accumulating a record of inputs into said jackpot and for debiting wins from said jackpot when allocated to one or more players.

Claim 67 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47 and comprising a parallel computer system adapted to one of duplicate and multiplicate said jackpot system in the sense of carrying out in parallel all computer operations of the jackpot system and means for continuously or repeatedly comparing the results of the jackpot system and the parallel computer system, and means for indicating a fault in the event of discrepancies or means for taking majority decisions.

Claim 68 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 47, wherein said jackpot system is configured as a software program configured for operation using said computer network.

Claim 69 (new): A jackpot system for the allocation of wins from at least one jackpot to players playing at a plurality of gaming positions, wherein said gaming positions are associated with a computer network including

- a centralized or distributed computing engine having a means for receiving, storing and processing inputs from the gaming positions and at least one output for communicating information to said players,

- at least one parameterizable win determination unit including at least one associated game of chance having rules and parameters relating to the rules and associated wins, said parameters being stored in said storage means, or in another storage means associated with said computer network, said win determination unit being capable of triggering play at said game of chance for each corresponding trigger input from one of a unit associated with a gaming position and a central unit to generate a result, and

- a comparator for comparing a result generated with the rules of the game, and, in the event of the result generated corresponding to a winning result, initiating the transfer of the associated win to one of at least one player at a said gaming position which triggered the winning result, to at least one player associated with a said gaming position which triggered the winning result, and to another jackpot.

Claim 70 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 69, wherein said game operated by said win determination unit has a winning probability.

Claim 71 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 70, wherein win determination unit has a setting input by which said winning probability can be statistically set.

Claim 72 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 71, wherein said win determination unit has a setting input by which said winning probability can be dynamically set.

Claim 73 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 69, wherein said win determination unit has a game stored therein having at least one step for producing a result and at least one of a win determination method and a win calculation method for determining whether said result is a win or no win and, in the event of a win, for determining at least one of a value and a type of win.

Claim 74 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 73, wherein said win determination unit uses a payable.

Claim 75 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 74, wherein said payable is a fixed payable.

Claim 76 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 74, wherein said payable is a parameterizable payable.

Claim 77 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 74, wherein said payable is a dynamically changeable payable.

Claim 78 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 69, wherein said win determination unit has means for the deterministic allocation of wins and at least one input for inputting criteria for the deterministic allocation of wins.

Claim 79 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 78, wherein said means for the deterministic allocation of wins comprises a counter and a comparator.

Claim 80 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 79, wherein said comparator is adapted to trigger a hit event.

Claim 81 (new): A method of operating a jackpot system for the allocation of wins from at least one jackpot to players playing at a plurality of gaming positions, wherein said gaming positions are associated with a computer network including a computing engine having a memory for receiving inputs from the gaming positions, and at least one output for communicating information to said players, the method comprising the steps of:

- providing inputs from each gaming position each time a new bet is wagered,
- inputting casino specified criteria depending whether a wagered bet qualifies for one or more chances of winning a win associated with said jackpot,
- setting up a game of chance having a payable associated with said at least one jackpot comprising a plurality of winning entries and at least one win associated with at least some of said winning entries,
- defining a said win associated with each of said winning entries,
- providing a selection generator to generate a selection which may be a winning entry in accordance with a specified probability,
- defining criteria determining a plurality of specified probabilities,
- deciding whether each wagered bet specifies said criteria qualifying the wagered bet for a chance of winning a jackpot and, if so, triggering said selection generator to generate a selection with a specified probability of it being a winning entry determined in accordance with said probability criteria,
- checking whether the selection generated constitutes a winning entry, and

- subsequently allocating a win associated with a winning entry to one or more players in accordance with allocation criteria specified by the casino.

Claim 82 (new): A method of testing a jackpot system in accordance with claim 81, comprising the steps of repeatedly testing communication channels throughout the network to ensure all attached units are functioning correctly, repeatedly triggering self-tests of the attached units, and checking the results.

Claim 83 (new): A method of testing a jackpot system in accordance with claim 81, comprising the steps of repeatedly performing a program verification step for all critical programs and repeatedly checking all critical parameters stored within the jackpot system and indicating a system fault if the program verification step fails for any one of a critical program and a critical parameter and subsequently remedying said fault.

Claim 84 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 51 wherein an item of information relating to the identity of the gaming position comprises one of an identification of a slot machine, an identification of a position at a gaming table, and an identification of a gaming table.

Claim 85 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 51 wherein an item of information relating to a player attribute comprises information selected from the group comprising name, age, sex membership of a group.

Claim 86 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 51 wherein an item of information relating to player activity level comprises information selected from the group comprising frequency of past visits, total turnover, turnover per visit, turnover per player session time, time of player session, number of games per session and average bet per game.

Claim 87 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 51 wherein an item of information relating to an external event comprises at least one of a manual input from an operator, an input from another jackpot of the same jackpot system, and an input from a jackpot of another jackpot system.

Claim 88 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 52 wherein said indicator comprises at least one of a loudspeaker and a vibrating seat.

Claim 89 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 54 wherein said sum of money comprising a win is related to a jackpot amount via the size of the bet.

Claim 90 (new): A jackpot system in accordance with claim 62 wherein an associated player comprises one of a player at an adjacent slot machine and another player at a common gaming table.